United Nations A/62/810

General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 April 2008

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Agenda item 16
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 17 April 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 14 April 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 16.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Chikovani**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

08-31203 (E) 230408

Annex to the letter dated 17 April 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia 17 April 2008

The Russian Federation has made yet another very dangerous step, which aims to legalize factual annexation of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia — integral parts of the internationally recognized territory of Georgia.

On 16 April Russian President V. Putin instructed the Russian Government to enter into direct cooperation, in disregard of the Government of Georgia, with representatives of the de facto authorities of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. By the same instruction, a list of documents issued by Abkhaz and South Ossetian de facto State agencies to individuals that are recognized by the State agencies of the Russian Federation is defined; the legal personality of legal entities, registered under the legislation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which is considered as *lex personalis* of such legal entities, is recognized; the Russian executive authorities were tasked to provide cooperation and legal assistance in the field of civil, family and criminal cases; and the Russian Foreign Ministry's local representations in Krasnodar district and in the Republic of North-Ossetia-Alania were entrusted with the task of performing consular functions to provide assistance to persons permanently living in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia. Moreover, plans were made to consider an additional set of proposals intended to further deepen cooperation in this direction.

The steps taken recently by the Russian Federation towards Georgia clearly contradict the universally recognized norms and principles of international law, in particular the principles of territorial integrity of States, sovereign equality of States, inviolability of borders and non-interference in internal affairs of States.

Russia seeks to justify its actions by "the need to take care of the interests of the population in the conflict regions, including Russian citizens living there". These efforts bear a close resemblance to the most notorious developments of the 1930s, when a number of sovereign countries were occupied by the totalitarian regimes under the same pretext.

Extremely alarming is Russia's decision to recognize the legitimacy of legal entities and documents of these regions. Taking such a decision, Russia justifies the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens, since the de facto authorities whose documents the Russian Federation is planning to recognize were created through this very cleansing.

The decision assigning the Russian Foreign Ministry to perform consular functions violates the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, while the decision on cooperation with these regions of Georgia in the field of civil, family and criminal cases contradicts the 1959 European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the CIS 1993 Convention on Legal Assistance in Civil, Family and Criminal Matters.

It proceeds from the foregoing that this decision of Russia poses an open threat to Georgia's statehood and sovereignty and is designed to launch a full-scale annexation process of the part of the Georgian territory.

It is our deep belief that Russia's actions are motivated by its desire to prevent Georgia's integration with the North Atlantic Alliance, which is supported by an absolute majority of the citizens of Georgia, including the entire population of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia appeals to the United Nations, the European Union, OSCE, the North Atlantic Alliance, the United Nations Secretary-General's Group of Friends, CIS and the international community as a whole to employ all resources at their disposal in order to stop the process undertaken by Russia towards infringement of Georgia's national integrity.